

Multiplex Concepts of Yoga: As per the Philosophical Framework of *Vāllabha Vedānta**.

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Introduction: Conceptual Background on *Pramāṇa* & *Prameya*:

The philosophy of Śrī-Vallabhācārya, (1478 – 1530) is not speculative in nature but it is reflective as far as the interpretation of the *śāstras* is concerned. It is thus the four *pramāṇas* namely *śruti* (*śabda* or Verbatim), *pratyakṣa* (Perception), *anumāna* (Inference) and *aitihya* (Legend), as proposed in the *śāstras*¹ -- are accorded in the school of Vāllabha Vedānta. However, Śrī-Vallabhācārya has accepted a different measure on authenticating the conceptual framework of Vedānta from that of all the other schools of Vedānta. In this case, the Vāllabha Vedānta proposes the following Quadra-level cognitive systems (CS) (*pramāṇa-vyavasthā*):

A

- 1) The First level of cognitive system is operative at the time of receiving the *śāstropadeśa* (*śāstric* instructions from the teacher) or at the time of investigating the conceptual foundation of the *śāstras* or in other words, at the time of having strong desire of 'knowledge', that is inevitable prior to the *śāstric* understanding of the entities related to the Brahman and / or the Brahman itself.
- 2) The Second level of cognitive system is operative at the time when there is a concrete understanding the conceptual foundation of the *śāstras* or in other words, at the time of investigating / debating the *śāstric* concepts with those who accept the *śāstras* as *pramāṇas* only after the verbal cognition raised of the intrinsic nature of the entities related to the Brahman and / or the Brahman itself.
- 3) The Third level of cognitive system is operative at the time when there is an realization of the Brahman or in other words, when the *brahmajñā* visualizes the *Brahman*.
- 4) The Fourth level of cognitive system is operative only at the time of incarnation of the Lord.

Mahāprabhu Śrī-Vallabhācārya, opines on the first level of cognitive system that, when the statements of *Śruti* (the Vedas), *Bhagavad-Gītā*, *Brahmasūtra* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* are found in complete coherent with each other, they alone are accepted to be valid. Because, whatsoever theme is not clear in the statements of the *śrutis*, it is made clear

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while delving into the Bhagavad-Gītā, and in the same manner if something is not clear even in that, that might be clearer through the investigation of Brahma-sūtras, and further whatsoever is even not clear in that, that certainly is made clearer through the investigation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. It is thus, these four canonical works are accepted as *pramāṇas* only when they are found in complete coherent in each other or being in unanimity². At this level, any contradictory statement that goes against the ‘statement of unanimity’ (*ekavākyatāpannavacana*) is not considered to be valid, and in the same manner any statement that repeats something said earlier is also accepted to be invalid since that conveys nothing that remains unknown otherwise. Though this not openly stated anywhere, on the basis of implicative syllogism (*arthāpatti*) it can be said that, any statement, that occurs in one of these four canonical works, which is not completely coherent with the other three, is also considered to be invalid at this level. It may further be noted here that the invalidity has a limited sphere on account of its applicability for easy understanding of the conceptual framework of the *śāstras* alone.

At the second level, Mahāprabhu (Śrī-Vallabhācārya) clarifies that the Only Brahman, has become *co-incidentia oppositarum* because, It has been manifested into multiplex forms of the universe having mutual contradictory names, forms and actions. Therefore, various statements in different *śāstric* traditions authenticate the *co-incidentia oppositarum* character of the Brahman, the ultimate reality by depicting Its mutual contradicting nature. However, it may be noted that due to the contradiction, it is not to be considered invalid; because, apparently two different entities, which appear to be contradictories on account of logical framework, may be authentic in the context of Brahman³.

In the third level, let alone the question of the authenticity of the *śāstric* statements, any statement that howsoever may appears to be inauthenticative or meaningless, that cannot be invalid on account of the *singularity* and *co-incidentia oppositarum* of the Brahman⁴.

At the fourth level the Lord can transgress the untransgressable laws of the nature, because He *plays* in the universe, that is being formed and controlled by the Time (*kāla*), Action (*karma*), Nature (*Svabhāva*), *Prakṛti* and / or *Puruṣa*, by His unthinkable and immeasurable power of *yoga-māyā*.

The clear understanding of these four levels of cognitive system is the keys to open the hidden meanings of the conceptual framework of Śrī-Vallabhācārya.

Because, any entity or activity, this worldly or the otherworldly, being naturally cognized by the mundane means of cognition, that is considered to be valid only in the mundane world. Even then, if the same entity or activity is otherwise cognized by the *śāstras* do not reveal a different cognitive state or disprove the former cognitive state. This is how in the *śāstric* sphere, the mundane reality would not contradict as far as the nature of the particular entity or activity is concerned. This is also true that just after the verbal understanding of a theme by the statements of the *śāstras*, the ‘reality’ – being known through the common means or through the outward perceptual cognitive instances – does not cease to be. It is because, the essential nature of a thing, as envisaged in a *śāstra*, is thoroughly realized only when the *śāstric* means, namely *karma* (Vedic rituals), *jñāna* (Vedic knowledge), *upāsana* (Vedic mode of worship), *bhakti* (devotion), *yoga* (yoga), *tapa* / (penance), *vairāgya* (detachment) etc. are well accomplished.

These *śāstric* means reveal the hidden nature of the entities – this worldly or the otherworldly – being cognized by the common means and without disproving them. For instance, when Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa blessed / granted Arjuna with the divine vision, at that time the human form of Lord Kṛṣṇa was not disappeared from the eyes of the latter, as the apparent snake in a rope, but the hidden Universal Form was being visualized in the same Human Form of Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa. For instance, the complex formation of a subtle entity, which is not visible by open eyes, is seen by a microscope and that does not disprove the subtleness of the

entity, on the contrary the hidden complex formation is magnified. Or for instance as the X-ray machine takes the picture of the skeleton of a living being without disfiguring the skin & flesh etc. those cover the body; in the same manner the śāstric or technical knowledge amplifies the subtle nature of an entity without disproving the mundane reality grasped by common means of cognitive instance.

B

According to the views of Mahāprabhu Śrī-Vallabhācārya, the second thing, regarding the 'Non-duality' (*Advaita*) of the Ultimate Reality as has been described in the *Śāstras* like the Vedas etc, it may not be understood as the absolute absence of 'dualism' but as 'positive non-dualism'. For instance if 'A' is considered to be the Brahman – the Absolute Reality without the Beginning and without the End, and further if we accept 'B', 'C', 'D' etc as the *names, forms and actions* having being born and will be perished in due course, then according to the views of Mahāprabhu 'A' cannot be defined in terms of {A = (- B, - C, - D ...)}; on the contrary, 'A' can be defined in terms of {A = (B, C, D ...)} and that is the true sense of 'Non-dualism' (*Advaita*) according to Vāllabha Vedānta. This is established in the following statements of Chāndogyopani•ad that says; “*How can what is existent be born from what is non-existent? On the contrary, son, in the beginning this world was simply what is existent – one only, without a second. ... and, It thought to itself – Let me become many, It became many*”⁵. The Chāndogyopani•ad, clearly states that the essential nature of an entity which is a product and is perishable, that indeed is the Brahman, the Compact Truth. In this context, at least the following two statements of B♦hadāra\yaka Upani•ad may specifically be quoted. It is said here that: “*This visible world in the beginning was without real distinction / manifestation. It was distinguished simply in terms of Name and Visible forms*”⁶. “*While the Self is One, yet it is this triple reality. Though it is the Name (nāma), the Visible Form (rūpa) and the Action (karma), still it is only, the only Brahman*”⁷.

In connection with this framework of Positive Non-dualistic thinking, all the śāstric means namely *karma* (Vedic rituals), *jñāna* (Vedic knowledge), *upāsana* (Vedic mode of worship), *bhakti* (devotion), *yoga* (yoga), *vairāgya* (detachment) and *tapa* / (penance), etc are understood and at the same time when we understand the system of cognitive function along with the objective construction, we can go further for a discussion on the systematic presentation of *means (sādhana)* as well as *the end / result (phala)*.

The Conceptual Framework of the *Means* and *Result* based on the said Cognitive and Objective Systems:

First of all if we think on the action (*karma*), there has been a debatable stance in many schools of philosophical systems on the ground that since the action is perishable, the result of the action is ought to be perishable. However, as has been shown above in the Vedic statements that the perishable nature of the action is just an aspect cognized in the worldly affair. The essential nature of the action on the contrary is coherent with the Brahman⁸. Therefore, only on the ground of perishable nature of action and its result they are not considered to be *false* in the Vāllabha school of Vedānta. It has been clearly stated in the śāstras that some time the 'action' gives perishable result and some other time it gives imperishable result depending upon the desire of the lord of action (*karma-phaladātā*)⁹.

In the same manner, thinking on the path of knowledge as a *means*, where the Supreme Reality becomes the 'object of the knowledge' itself, it is considered being beyond the limitation of Time-Space-Objective structure as its distinguishing and distinctive nature. However, all the entities engrossed by the limitation of Time-Space-Objective consideration

appear in the mundane reality are not necessarily remain bereft from the coherence of the Brahman all being in the dualism of name-form-action (*nāma-rūpa-karma*). Therefore, without ceasing the Human Form of Lord Krishna, as His Universal Form appeared (before Arjuna) simultaneously giving a scope to both the types, the reality of the dual-status of each and every object appears before the ‘knower’ (*brahma-jñānī*). Thus Mahāprabhu says: “*In the instances of the cognition of illusion, it is only our understanding that alone is erroneous or false. Otherwise the Lord Himself does become the object of the cognition of illusion.*” “*The Brahman being atomic in size can overspread all over (the world). Even though Lord ŚrīKṛṣṇa is resting on the lap of mother Yaśodā, He is the upholding the whole universe*”¹⁰. Therefore, as in climax of the ‘realization of the Brahman’ (*brahmāmubhūti*) – mundane cognition is not totally obliterated as per the school of Vāllabha Vedānta, but it is the realization of the Supreme Lord as the Inner Controller or intrinsic unity being present in all the mundane entities¹¹.

Once we understand the *means* of *karma* and *jñāna* as has been stated above, whether the other *means* namely *upāsana* (Vedic mode of worship), *bhakti* (devotion) and *yoga* yield an imaginary result or real can easily be understood. Because, the question comes that when *devotional means* is adopted for the Brahman, who is of innumerable name-form-action (*nāma-rūpa-karma*), one adheres to the mode of a particular name-form-action, where his devotional attachment remains firm – that in fact is the *real* acceptance of the true nature of the devotant / worshiped or *unreal*? In the same manner the question may come that in the path of *yoga*, when someone’s mind has become very clear through the practice of *yama-niyama-āsana-prāṇāyāma-pratyāhāra* etc. and his mind is firmly concentrated upon the *dhyeya* (the ultimate goal of meditation) as part of the mode of *dhāraṇa* and *dhyāna*, whether that is just binding the mind firmly with the object of the meditation that has a Utilitarian Value or that has a Transcendental Truth-corresponding Value? This question creates a problem in between the scholar, an intellectual who has not realized (the Reality) and the *sādhaka* who has ‘the realization’ through the above said path of *yoga*. The Vāllabha Vedānta clearly thinks on this issue that on the basis of the unanimity of the above stated four-level cognitive systems (CS) (*pramāṇa-vyavasthā*), all these forms not necessarily be accepted as *unreal* or *imaginary*¹². According to the conclusive view of the Vāllabha Vedānta, if there is no Time-Space-Objective correspondence for any mental conception / cognitive instance, that is useful or not in the mundane world, is considered to be *unreal* or *imaginary*. For instance, if a *yoga-sādhaka* (practitioner of *yoga*) tries to concentrate upon the form of a ‘jar’ at a time and space where there is absolute absence of the jar, the mental existence of the jar – in which his mind is firmly concentrated upon and in which there is no awareness of any other object at all – can not regarded as proof of objectively valid jar. On the contrary the Supreme Brahman, who is in the *Form* of every space, every time and every object, remains in the form of the mind itself at the time of meditation, and at the same time He is the *Object* of the meditation¹³, thus the objective imagination of Brahman cannot be false at all.

Therefore, in course of practicing *yoga* or in course of practicing *vairāgya*, whatsoever blemish is seen or aversion is caused on account of *yama-niyama-pratyāhāra* or *tyāga* respectively, that indeed is not a blemish or aversion (in a wider sense) in accordance with the positive non-dualism, but it is only in a limited sense of a particular *sāadhanā* (means) that is meant for a particular ‘result’. For example, the holy water of mother Gaṅgā also becomes undrinkable in a cup of wine. That’s like that¹⁴.

Now we can proceed for the enquiry into the theoretical framework of *yoga-sāadhanā* only after the brief discussion of these conceptual backgrounds of Vāllabha Vedānta, which is ought to be known.

The Inevitability of Yoga, Its Subordinate and / or Its Prominent Nature According to Vāllabha Vedānta:

In the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, the three means (*sādhanās*) namely *karma* (Vedic rituals), *jñāna* (knowledge) and *bhakti* (devotion) are accepted as *yogas* and nothing other than these is accepted as *means* that can lead to the ultimate goal.

Yogās trayo mayā proktā nō lam śreyo vidhīsayā .
jñānam karma ca bhaktiś ca nopāyo 'nyo 'sti kutrचित्..
nirvir)ānām jñānayogo nyāsinām iha karmasu .
te anirvi)acittānām karmayogastu kāmīnām ..
yad cchayā matkathādau jātaśraddhas tu ya /pumān.
na nirvir)o nātisakto bhaktiyogo 'sya siddhida [.¹⁵

In this context, if we look into the characteristics of the three competent practitioners of yoga as has been described, it appears that independent *yoga-sādhanā* is not required for any of these competent / entitled person. However, Mahāprabhu ŚrīVallabhācārya has explained some of the means of salvation / the highest goal in his works namely Tattvārthadīpanibandha and Bālabodha. That is as follows:

Mokṣa / The Highest Goal		
<p><i>Vedādi-pramāṇa catuṣṭayopadiṣṭa</i> = Taught in the Quadra-cognitive means starting with the Śruti / the Vedas etc.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">⇓</p>	<p><i>Ārāgamopadiṣṭa</i> = Taught in the Āgamas handed down from the trend of the Śruti is.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">⇓</p>	
<p>a) <i>niṣkāma-śrauta-karma-labhya</i> = Available through the Vedic rituals performed without aiming at any worldly result.</p>	<p>Svata </p> <p style="text-align: center;">⇓</p>	<p>Parata </p> <p style="text-align: center;">⇓</p>
<p>b) <i>Aupaniṣad Brahma-jñāna-labhya</i> = Available through the knowledge of the Brahman taught in the Upaniṣads.</p>	<p>(a) <i>Sāṅkhyāgamopadiṣṭa-mārgata</i> /= through the path as has been taught in Sāṅkhya āgama.</p>	<p>(a) <i>Śaivāgamopadiṣṭa-mārgata</i> /= through the path as has been taught in Śaiva āgama.</p>
<p>c) <i>Aupaniṣad Brahma-viśvayakya-bhakti labhya</i> = Available through the devotion of the Brahman taught in the Upaniṣads.</p>	<p>(b) <i>Yogāgamopadiṣṭa-mārgata</i> /= through the path as has been taught in Yoga āgama.</p>	<p>(b) <i>Vaiṣṇava-āgamopadiṣṭa-mārgata</i> /= through the path as has been taught in Vaiṣṇava āgama.</p>

We can see that there are only three ways / means for getting *mokṣa* (salvation) as stated in the four cognitive systems (*pramāṇas*) starting with the Veda. The *yogic* system has been incorporated into these three as subordinate and the interesting fact is that these three therefore, are named in Śrīmad-Bhagavad Gītā as '*Karma-yoga*', '*Jñāna-yoga*' and '*Bhakti-yoga*' instead of just '*karma*', '*jñāna*' and '*bhakti*'. It is somehow wrongly presumed by majority of scholars that there is only one way / means i.e. *bhakti-marga* being accepted for

the ultimate goal in the Vāllabha Vedānta, because there is an emphasis or an overtone on the *means* (*sādhanā*) namely the devotional path found in the works of Mahāprabhu Śrī Vallabhācārya and further these works are not thoroughly studied.

In fact one must ponder on: what are the items shown in the above list not accepted as the *means* for salvation by Mahāprabhu Śrī Vallabhācārya? As a matter of fact this refers to the means only, which are taught in connection with the ultimate goal in the *śāstras*. Otherwise, the principles / laws of the means as has been taught in the *śāstras* will act as bondage to the salvation-seeking beings, of course not for the Supreme Being. Therefore, when the Lord takes an incarnation on the earth He sometime trespasses these laws / principles and grants salvations as part of his *līlā* (divine play). That is also accepted as *divine play* of His incarnation in the system of Vāllabha Vedānta. The question is: otherwise why and how the *Gopīs* (the cowherd girls) who had a paramour type of relationship with Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which is denounced in the *śāstras*, got salvations? Śrī Śukamuni, gave the following clarification in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam to king Parīkṣita, who had a query of this sort that if the Lord can grant salvation to His enemies, who had strong enmity with Him, why can't He grant salvation to the *Gopīs*, who had strong desire of love? If Lord's incarnation on the earth is meant for granting salvation for the beings, then whosoever has a strong unfailing and steadfast attachment with Him on any of the emotional aspects of love, anger, fear, affection, closeness or friendliness, he / she ultimately becomes *bhagavanmaya* (engrossed in the Lord)¹⁶. In that case, how Vāllabha Vedānta can take objection to any method / means, that is prescribed as pure and auspicious in the *śāstras* for the ultimate goal? And therefore, in the given list, not only the *means* as has been taught in the Vedas namely *karma*, *jñāna* and *bhakti* are accepted as the means for salvation in the Vāllabha Vedānta; but also the means of worshipping the lower gods those are taught in the Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava, Paurāṇika and Āgama trends in one hand and adhering to the path of self-realization through the means of Sāṅkhya-Yoga for those who are the seekers of salvation (*mumukṣus*) on the other hand.

Yoga is one of the Five Facets of the *Brahmavidyā* Available only Through the Grace of God is the Best Means in the *Brahmic* Salvation:

On this controversial issue, if someone wants to know the secrets of Vāllabha Vedānta, I can say that according to Mahāprabhu Śrī Vallabhācārya, the *brahmavidyā* – that is gained only through the grace of God – is the direct path of salvation. *Brahmavidyā* means proper understanding of the nature of Brahman as has been taught in the *śāstras*. The salvation is possible only when the all-pervasive *Brahmic* ignorance is completely destroyed on account of this *brahmavidyā*.

As we have seen that the Brahman Himself either manifests or disappears the self-cognizance of himself being part of the Brahman in the form of the individual being (*jīvātman*) which is in the form of consciousness. He concurs the manifestation and disappearance through His own power of *Vidyā* or *Avidyā*. The Brahman through His power of *Avidyā* induces in the individual soul's self-ignorance on account of imposition of internal faculties (*anta kara ādhyāsa*), imposition of vital energy (*prā ādhyāsa*), imposition of sense-organs (*indriyādhyaśa*), and imposition of body (*dehādhyaśa*) on His own part i.e. consciousness. Therefore, the individual being, which is the direct consciousness-part of the *Sac-Cid-Ānanda Brahman* cannot know himself. These five facets of *Avidyā* can be ceased only through the power of five-faceted *Vidyā*. The five facets of *vidyā-śaktis* are enumerated as follows: (i) *Vairāgya* (detachment), (ii) *sāṅkhya* (knowledge), (iii) *Yoga* (*yoga*), (iv) *tapa* / (penance) and (v) *bhakti* (devotion). Mahāprabhu Śrī Vallabhācārya describing the nature of these five facets say that first of all arousing aversion in the matters of sense organs is the

first facet of *Vidyā*. Next to that through the second facet, when the distinguishing knowledge arises of permanent as well as temporal entities, at that time the attachment of the temporal things is destroyed and thus giving them up becomes possible. Thereafter, the third facet, i.e. yoga comes into picture, and in that one needs to practice the eight-fold yoga *viz. yaama-niyama-āsana-prāṅyāma-pratyāhāra-dhāraṅgā-dhyāna-samādhi* lonely. In the fourth facet i.e. while practicing *tapa* / (penance), one needs to concentrate on being in firm meditation of *savikalpa-samādhi*. This is how when someone constantly goes on practicing the meditation, unfailing love for the Supreme Being arises. That helps in gaining the *brahmavidyā*, which in turn helps in realizing the *Brahman*. In other words, the result of the *brahmavidyā* is the individual being (*jīvātma*), that is the part of the Supreme Being emerges into the Whole¹⁷.

All the Means of Salvation are the Intermediate Causal Factors of God's Desire towards Granting Salvation to the Individual Beings:

At this stage it becomes imperative to know two more things. First of all, all the means for salvation – those are taught or discussed in the *śāstras* – are not necessarily envisaged as means of salvation in the Vāllabha School of Vedānta; but they are considered without any exception to be the intermediate causal factors to the *grace* of God for granting salvation. As he speaks himself: all those – *karma, jñāna, bhakti, sāṅkhyā, yoga, tapa / vairāgya*, etc. – accepted as means of salvation are indeed the intermediate causal factors of the grace of the Lord, and thus those are able to grant various types of results. Therefore, in fact, God's grace is the *only means* for granting salvation¹⁸. The second thing is that: the Vedic ritual, which is performance dominating; the Upaniṣadic-path of knowledge, which is *śānta-rasa*-dominating; the path of devotion as has been narrated in the Bhagavad Gītā and Bhāgavatam, which is *bhagavat-rasāmubhūti*-dominating; the path of Sāṅkhyā, which is detachment-dominating; the path of yoga, which is *saṅgyama-vairāgya*-dominating etc. all those means have been designed to reveal some-or-other forms of the Lord, the Supreme Being. The Lord, however, reveals Himself in a form depending upon the *means*. The Supreme Being who is in the form of Supreme Bliss, when reveals Himself through the *Bhakti-yoga*, the yoga of devotion, He indeed reveals His form of Ultimate Bliss or Optimum Form of Love that goes well in accordance with His nature of Devotion. Therefore, even though the salvation is available through many means, still there is a difference in the degree of happiness in the Natural Bliss of the Lord and His realization.

The path of *Sāṅkhyā* is a system that gives pleasure for a person who has acquired the strength of tolerating the pains that is caused by the ignorance due to the absence of realizing the sublime Bliss of the Lord. It is as if a person who is very thirsty but he does not get disturbed because he has the strength to tolerate it. The *yoga-mārga* is a means to be self-dependant of digging up a well and drinking water at the time of feeling thirsty. *Bhakti-mārga* on the other hand, is like arrival of the thirsty man at the bank of a river of pure water, for whom plenty of water is available easily as and when and as much as he might be in need of¹⁹.

The Classifications of the Means followed in Yogic Path – Being Subordinate to *Karma, Jñāna & Bhakti* and Also Being Independent of These:

The theoretical stand of Sāṅkhyā and Yoga has been described to be coming from non-Vedic sources in the first quarter (*pāda*) of the second *Adhyāya* (Chapter) of Brahmasūtra, technically known as *Avirodhādhyāya*. In contrast to that the statements of the *Śrutis*, which is the foundation of Brahmasūtra it has been stated clearly that:

“nityo nityānām cetana /cetanānām eko bahūnām vidadhāti kāmān .
 tat-kāra)am sāṅkhyā-yogādhigamyam jītvā devam mucyate sarvapāśai /..”
 “yadā paścāvati •hante jīnāni manasā saha.
 buddhiś ca na vice •ati tām āhu /paramām gatim ..”
 “tām yogam iti manyante sthirām indriyadhāra)am”²⁰

In these statements, the Supreme Reality that is described in the Upaniads is accepted to be known through the systems of Sāṅkhyā-Yoga. To eradicate this contradiction Mahāprabhu Śrī Vallabhācārya says that the Sāṅkhyā theory is seen in various forms and all the 28 entities are treated to be part / form of the Lord that alone is to be accepted as authentic and rest of the others are inauthentic. In the same manner, the mode of *Yoga* is considered to be authentic which advocates the meditation of the Lord. Because, *yoga* basically teaches the ways for the cessation of the *citta-vṛttis* (state of mental faculties). If *yoga* can be useful for meditating upon the Lord, then only it can be taken to be authentic. The system of *yoga* that refutes the existence of the Lord, and that teaches achieving some short of *siddhis* or that is applied for gaining some benefit related to the body or sense organs, such *yoga* should be discarded as inauthentic. Of course there is no particular way for meditating upon the Supreme Lord, still if the individual being (*jīvātmā*) is considered as the part of the Supreme Being and someone meditates upon Him for gaining the Self-realization, and if such a process is taught somewhere then that (the yogic system) can be accepted as authentic. Because by following any one of these means namely *vairāgya* (detachment), *jīnā* (knowledge), *yoga*, *prema* (love) or *tapa* / (penance) if someone firmly prays the Lord, he / she can get the *siddhi* (the ultimate goal).

Yoga is a Part and Parcel of the Five-Faceted *Vidyā*:

It is advisable that one should constantly pray the Lord being well versed in the five faceted *vidyā*. Because, *vairāgya* (detachment) is the first amongst the five facets, and in the absence of that, complete absorption with the Lord is not possible and in that case worship of the Lord will not be possible properly. The second facet is *jīnā* and it is all about gaining the knowledge of all manifested beings and things along with the creator. In the absence of this the *sādhaka* cannot decide the paths and in that case he /she cannot even start his / her course of *sādhana*. In the same manner *yoga* also becomes an essential part because this makes the mind firm and that in turn helps for worshipping him constantly. The fourth facet *prema* (love) is also accepted to be part and parcel of *Brahmavidyā* because without that the ‘worship’ loses the status of unmotivated self-rewarding character of ‘human goal’ (*svata / puruṣārtha*) and that results in un-manifestation of *bhakti-rasa*. The fifth facet *tapa* / is accepted because that regulates the due proportion of self-involvement in the body and its various functions. All these five facets cannot be practiced at once and thus if one of them is practiced at a time that is also considered to be fine. It may be pointed out here that the devotion (*bhakti*) and the *yoga* both play the subordinate role to *Brahmavidyā*, which are considered as facets to it and the usefulness of *yoga* is being taught here in a very general sense²¹.

The Utility of Yoga as Part of *Navadhā Bhakti* (Nine-fold Devotion) as per the Purāṇa Tradition:

In the same manner Mahāprabhu Śrī Vallabhācārya emphasizes on the adoptability of *yogic means* in terms of “*yoga-sahita-bhajane prema*”²² as part of nine-fold devotional path namely *śravaṇa*, (listening to Lord’s qualities), *kīrtana* (singing ...), *smaraṇa* (remembering ...), *pādasevana* (serving at the feet ...), *arcana* (offering ...), *vandana* (saluting ...), *dāsyā* (being a servant like ...), *sakhya* (being a friend like ...), and *ātma-nivedana* (self dedication ...) those are described in the Purāṇas.

The yogic process that is part of the devotion has been described in many places of Bhāgavata Purāṇa. For example, in the first and second chapters of the Second Book (Dvītiya Skandha), it has been advised that one ought to concentrate / meditate upon the Special or Universal form of the Supreme Lord. In this context, the yogic process has been taught as subordinate to the first three parts namely *śravaṇa*, *kīrtana* and *Smaraṇa* of the nine-fold devotional path. In the same fashion, in course of the dialogue between Kapila and Devahūti, that is narrated in detail in the Third Book, the process of meditation is also found. The Subodhinī commentary by Mahāprabhu on this portion of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam is available and therefore, it will be worthwhile in examining that there itself. Just to acquaint with the concerned topic in brief the following statement can be quoted here:

“*antakāle tu puruṣa āgata gatasādḥvasa //*
chindyād asaṅga-śāstre ṇa sp ḥām dehe ’nu ye ca tam //

... ..
dhīra / puṇyatīrtha-jalāpluta / śucau vivikta āsīno vidhivat kalpitāsane abhyaset
manasā śuddham trivṛt brahmākāram param. Mano yacched jitaśvāso
brahmabījam anusmaran. niyacched viśayebhyo akān manasā buddhisārathi /
mana / karmabhi / ākṛiptam śubhārthe dhārayet dhīyā. tatra ekāvayavam dhyāyet
avyucchinnena cetasā. mano nirviśyam yuktyā tata / kiṅcīt na saṅsmaret. padam tat
param viṣṇo / mano yatra prasīdati. rajastamobhyām ākṛiptam vimūḥam mana /
ātmano yacched dhāraṇyā dhīrā / hanti yā tatkṛtam malam. yatra
saṅdhāryamā ṇānam yogina / bhaktīlakṣṇa / āśu saṅpadyate yoga / āśrayam bhadrām
īkṣata ḥ (Śloka 16 - 21).

In the commentary, Mahāprabhu Śrī Vallabhācārya has explained the utility and the nature of yoga that has been taught here. The process of meditation should not be understood only to be practiced at the time of final departure. This process of meditation indeed is to be followed always by all means. The contemplation (*manana*) and concentration (*nīdīdhyāsana*) taught in the Upaniṣads are described here. *Manana* means contemplating the topics of the *śrutis* with the help of logic. The Lord is told ‘to be listened’. Therefore, ‘Who is Lord’ and ‘How is the Lord’ – one should have such desire to know and then only the Lord is invariably found in every form (Omnipresent), He is the in the form of all Human Goals, He is the giver of all the results (Omnipotent) and He is in the form of Everything. The question is: how is it possible all that is seen is in fact the form of the Lord? There are several evidences shown in the *śrutis* for giving a satisfactory reply to this question. However, to strengthen the concept or the contemplation it has been prescribed to identify the whole universe in the body of the Lord as parts or limbs and thereafter one must meditate upon that. Because, in case there is a possibility of envision of the object of meditation, our mind must be competent or alert enough to accept and envisage the form of the Lord, the way He appears before us. When we envisage the whole universe in the body of the Lord, the mind’s interference in the way of ‘I-ness’ and ‘mine-ness’ that engrosses everything is to be sliced / cut off with the help of the knife called *asaṅga* (detachment). Thereafter, one has to practice to keep patience not to be disturbed by the external problems like cold or heat etc. By this, in fact what has been technically told is *yama* that covers a lot of moral values namely non-

killing / non-violence (*ahiṃsā*), truthfulness (*satya*), non-stealing (*astheya*), detachment (*asaṅga*), non-grabbing (*asaṅkaya*), having faith upon (*āsthiya*), celibacy (*brahmacarya*), silence (*mauna*), patience (*sthairya*), forgiveness (*kṣamā*), fearlessness (*abhaya*), purity (*śauca*), chanting the mantra (*japa*), penance (*tapa*), sacrifice (*homa*), stable faith (*śraddhā*), hospitality (*ātithya*), adoration for the God (*bhagavadarcana*), visiting holy places (*tīrthāṇana*), thinking of benefaction (*parārthehā*), satisfaction (*tuṣṭi*), serving the teachers (*ācārya-sevana*) etc. Here the term 'puṣya-tīrtha-jala' implies that one should give up taking plain water and visiting holy places for fulfilling material desire. The practice of this *yoga* is advised by sitting on seat made up off either cloth, or skin of antelope, or *kuśa*-(*Poa-cynosuroides*)-grass. When someone practices the *sabīja-prāṇyāma* (a type of breathing exercise that goes along with the chanting of *Omkāra*), it helps him to control the breathing system quickly. The *prāṇyāma* is to be practiced with the uni-latter *Omkāra*, that is the name of the Brahman, consisting of three holy letters namely *a-kāra*, *u-kāra* and *m-kāra*. By this practice one gains control over the breathing system. Anybody who cannot control over his / her breathing system cannot control over his / her mind. A person who can control over his mind can control over his sense organs. Otherwise, the vicious attitude of the mind in the matters of sense organs may cause the mind in distracting from the practice of *yoga*. The mental faculty constitutes both the sensitive organs as well as the motor organs, and thus with the help of *pratyāhāra* (a technical name for the fifth part of *yoga*), one can resist from doing wrong deeds like someone controls the sense organs from their respecting matters. When someone is very perfect in doing this, now he can proceed on making a mental image of the Lord and worship Him by concentrating his mind in different parts or limbs of the image, and this is called *dhāraṇā*. Concentrating the mind in any single limb / part is called *dhyāna*. One should concentrate on the different limbs and gradually concentrate on the whole unified body. When this type of meditation becomes perfect then only for sometime one should try to make his mind completely empty, bereft of all the matters. In this process when someone realizes that his mind is relaxed and enjoying Supreme bliss then he should understand that the figure of the Lord is established in the Self itself, which is the divine eternal abode of the Lord instead of the mental faculties. Only on the ground of this concentration the *yogi* regains the perfection of a superior *yoga* called *bhakti-yoga* (*yoga* of devotion).

After this king Parīkṣita asked: how someone can gain this type of concentration? Whether one make a mental image and concentrate upon it or one should make a physical image as per the *sāstras*? The Lord is of infinite images; in that case, what type of image can be made that will be acceptable to all the *yogins* without any exception. What type of image? – The question implies whether it should be formal physically or qualitative intentionally? Whether it should be gross or subtle? Whether it should be formless or embodied? Whether one should meditated upon the internal composed image of the Lord or the decorative and attractive external image of the Lord? How all the mental-inflicts are eradicated?

In conciliation with this Śukamuni first of all suggested meditating upon the gross image of the Lord. The grossness is constituted with taking whole the universe into account and that helps in conceptualizing the Universal Form of the Lord. For that one has to identify the lower world with the feet of the Lord, and in the process, starting from the feet one has to go up to the head of the Lord by identifying the whole universe gradually and then to meditate upon it. That in turn will help in realizing the whole Universe as the Brahman, and all the matters in the universe will automatically get transformed into the form of the Supreme Divine Being. This happens like in a dreaming state where there is nothing other than the dreamer, or any object of dreaming; neither the sense organ for seeing the dream nor the cognitive experience exists. In the same manner when there is clear realization of the

Brahmic state everywhere the difference from Brahman cease to exist. This is how the Ultimate Truth, invaluable treasure of Complete Bliss, the Lord is prayed through the meditation and concentration. Therefore, He is described as being beyond the three *guas*, essentially being in the form of Pleasure and being in the form of the Anything and Everything, the Brahman in the Śrīmad Bhagavdgītā²³. Thus, it is possible to be in close association without any fear or favor with such Bhagavān, the Lord of the Universe, as has been described in the beginning of the 4th Brāhmaṇa of the first book of the Bḥadāraṇyaka Upaniḥad²⁴.

The Upaniḥads have found out the solo-feature in the multiplex nature – that settles the issue of double-trouble namely the boredom of remaining alone and fear of staying with other. The process of meditation and concentration on the physical form of the Lord, that has been taught in the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, helps the *yogin* to overcome the *boredom* due to loneliness being developed during the state of remaining in firm concentration and the *fear* that comes during the non-concentration state that comes at an earlier stage. For the envision of the Ultimate Truth described in the Upaniḥads, the wondrous extensive features of the Universal Form of the *Brahman* is enumerated / explicated in the Bḥadāraṇyaka Upaniḥad in epistemological manner and in Bhāgavata-purāṇa in the concentration-meditation manner.

The Definition of *bhakti-yoga* as has been given in Nārada Pāñcarātra – “Firm love in abundance with the knowledge of His Magnanimity” – is accepted in Vāllabha Vedānta. In accordance with that the ‘cognizance or the acceptance’ of the *identity* of the Self of the devotee with the Brahman in the form of the extensive expansion of the Universe that exists in the outer world arises the knowledge of the Magnanimity of the Brahman within the individual being (*jīvātmā*). In the same manner the ‘cognizance or the acceptance’ of the *identity* of the Brahman inside the individual being (*jīvātmā*) makes him of having firm love in abundance with the Lord, the Supreme Being, and the Brahman. In other words, this realization of the *identity* – inwardly and outwardly – of the individual being (*jīvātmā*) with the *Brhman*, makes *him* a devotee-*yogin* of the *Paramātmā*, the Supreme Being.

It is therefore, the ultimate purpose of the nine-time teaching of the followings in the Chāndogyopaniḥad i.e. – “*sa ya eḥo aḥimā, aīdātmyam idam sarvam, tat satyam sa ātmā, tat tvam asī*”²⁵ is interpreted by Mahāprabhu Śrī Vallabhācārya in accordance with arousing the *bhaktiyoga* in the form of – “Firm love in abundance with the knowledge of His Magnanimity”. Mostly the intension of the Upaniḥads in describing the creation of the Universe is to be understood in the sense of describing the Lord’s magnanimity only, because that may somehow help the individuals to get engaged in the prayers of the Lord. The other aspect of the devotion is ‘firm love in abundance’, and to arouse that the Upaniḥads teach the *identity* in between the *jīvātman* and *paramātman*²⁶.

Further, when we go ahead in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, it is advised to arouse the same state of identity in the inner hearts of the devotees in concentrating upon the localized image of the Lord:

“This is how the self-revealed one in the mental faculties and the dear-most object i.e. the Lord is infinite. The Lord is thus the cause of the cessation of the false concepts of the world (*saḥsāra*) and therefore, one should pray Him blissfully and devotedly. ... Some of the devotees concentrate upon Him in His Localized Personality revealed in their inner heart. They constantly apprehend each and every beauteous limbs of the Fourhanded Lord in their mind. When someone (a *sādhaka*) is completely victorious

over one after the other beautiful limbs starting from His lotus-feet till His smiling lotus like face by constant concentration, his mental faculties gradually become purer and then the devotional *yoga* becomes firmer in the Omniscient, Omnipotent Supreme Lord. Unless and until this is achieved, one should constantly and consciously try to concentrate upon the physical form of the Lord as advised above²⁷.

Mahāprabhu Śrī Vallabhācārya explaining these *kārikās* in the commentary – *Subodhinī* – says that: the Lord, who arouses an inciting to be absolutely non-expectant in the mental faculties of a *sādhaka*, He must be staying somewhere in the mind itself. Such worship-able is being said to be ‘dear’ because He is the Self, and He is ‘desideratum’ because He is dear, He is the ‘Lord’ because He is desideratum, and He is ‘infinite’ because He is the Lord. These five forms urge everyone to get engaged in the service of the Lord. The life or the body is dear to everyone. Still, these are limited and thus the love for these naturally becomes limited. Therefore, when there is a contact with someone the other contact is lost. Therefore, one should keep contact with the Lord, the Universal Being. In fact ‘love’ is an intrinsic property of the Lord. The Lord has distributed this partly with every being for giving them some pleasure. Thus whosoever loves whomsoever he / she gets pleasure out of it. We indeed get the pleasure of love everywhere but the material objects are not real causes of it. In this manner when everything is settled, one should continue in pursuing the path of *sādhanā* starting from the ‘listening to (the Vedas)’ etc. being in the path of devotion. The fourhanded physical form of the Lord, where the hand-feet-face-stomach-etc. narrated are nothing but the ‘bliss’ alone. This is how while someone practices the worship along with the knowledge, the concentration-meditation of the blissful form is explained in place of the physical form of the Lord as has been described above²⁸. The mode that: how one should concentrate and meditate upon in the form of Blissful Lord has been described in detail in the 28th chapter of the third book of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, in the context of Kapila-Devahūtī dialogue. All of that is nothing but the subordinate means of yogic path just to arouse the principal three-fold i.e. *śravaṇa-kīrtana-smaraṇa* or nine-fold devotional ways namely *śravaṇa*, (listening to Lord’s qualities), *kīrtana* (singing ...), *smaraṇa* (remembering ...), *pādasevana* (serving at the feet ...), *arcane* (adoration ...), *vandana* (saluting ...), *dāsyā* (being a servant like ...), *sakhya* (being a friend like ...), and *ātma-nivedana* (dedicating oneself ...) those are described in the Purāṇas for the ultimate goal.

Yoga and other Subordinate Means are not Required in the Love-Centric *Bhakti-Yoga*:

The love-centric devotion, the tenth one, is innate in all the souls although it may not be explicitly open. Vāllabha Vedānta, accepts its root as stated above in the theory of the identity with the Brahman as described in the Upaniṣads. This is accepted to be superior to the three-fold or nine-fold devotional means of the Purāṇas, or it is accepted as the state of perfection that is achieved after the devotional means. “*Bhaktiyā sañjāyā bhaktiyā*”²⁹ – it has been stated that as this superior love-centric devotion arises through the three-fold / nine-fold devotion with the help of *yoga*; in the same manner, that also arises only through the association of the holy-people and self-dedication etc. without the yogic path. This love-centric devotion is treated as the only *bhakti-yoga* none other than by the Lord Himself and He shows its distinct nature:

“The yogin who is devoted to the Lord, and who sees Him as his own Self, even without the knowledge or detachment he gains benefit in this world. Because

whatsoever is available through good-deeds, through penance, through knowledge and detachment, through donations and auspicious works like that, all that is available to the devotee easily through the devotion to the Lord alone. The composed minded and honest people, who are sincere devotees to the Lord, do not want the salvation that is bereft of rebirth even though the Lord offers the same. This is how those who do not want anything but the Lord alone until the final goal is achieved, there is no scarcity of the Supreme Well-being³⁰.

Mahāprabhu Śrī Vallabhācārya has given a very interesting explanation in the context of this love-centric devotion: In the path of knowledge, there is no distinction with anything that is cognizable being the part and parcel of the non-dualistic state, because everything completely becomes the *brahman*. In the path of devotion, on the other hand, it is not so simple, because, as the Lord has created the whole Universe, similarly He has created the path of devotion for Himself somehow separately. (This is accepted on the basis of the *Śruti* that states – “He did not wanted to be alone, He wanted the second one, and therefore, He created everything.³¹”) He assigned the responsibility to grant the worldly means and results to His powers incarnates, and He remained in His Blissful-state keeping the power of granting the joy of worship to His own desire or pleasure. In the merciful path of devotion, though the outward prayer is accepted as the principal one, still the worship of the internal image of the Lord in the mind is regarded as falling in the path of knowledge³². It may be kept in mind that this procedure is applicable to the stage of *sāadhanā*, however, in the stage of the result, the process of outer worship is relaxed. In the *phalāāhyāya* of the *Braīmasūtra-bhā•ya* the Bhā•yakāra says: when the mind is fully concentrated upon the true nature of the Lord, there will be no apprehension of the outward or inward distinction and there will not be any difference between the outer prayer or inner prayer³³. Therefore, either at the beginning or at the final stage of the love-centric devotion in the association of the means followed in the *yoga-mārga* remains secondary. The rituals, the epistemic and / or injunctive desires can be governed by the *śāstric* patterns, but those can neither control the experience nor the love.

The Assistance of the Yogic Means in the Adoration Practiced in the *Jñāna-mārga* (path of knowledge):

In the context of the assistance of the yogic means followed in the *sāadhanā* in the path of knowledge, Mahāprabhu Śrī Vallabhācārya says that since the mind is endowed with the power of knowledge and the power of activity, it is potential being the both. Therefore, we are able to know the distinction of both – this-worldly and the otherworldly, the eternal and the temporal, the seen and the unseen, the auspicious and inauspicious – through the *śāstra* and through the discriminatory / judgmental faculty. If we can enforce the power of activity through yoga, then only mediation or concentration of the mind in the object meditated upon becomes firm; otherwise, generally the active forces inside us destabilize our knowledge. Whatsoever we think improper / inappropriate through the power of knowledge, sometime we are forced to do that. In the activity that leads to produce the result, we see that the desire is more powerful than the knowledge, and the volitional effort is still more powerful than the desire, in the same manner the ‘speech’ is more powerful than the ‘mind’ and ‘body’ is more powerful than the ‘speech’. Because, there is an unseen force of ‘lust’ etc., and the unseen force is so powerful that the mind is forced to enter into the worldly affairs / pleasure. In that condition, the yogic path even becomes useless. When the wind is blowing forcefully no one can light a candle even though there is a deep darkness. Therefore, when someone can control over the powers of activities related to the body and speech, then only he / she can

concentrate upon the mental image³⁴. It is thus; the assistance of the yogic means is very much required for making the mind firm in the path of knowledge (*jīāna-mārga*).

At this stage it may be useful to note that if the meditator himself conceives the mental image not as the *Brahman* but any other divine being for gaining some minor result and he / she meditates upon him, then such yoga will result in giving the minor result only. On the contrary, if the meditator concentrates upon any inferior divinity or mental image of His partial powers as the *Brahman*, then such yoga being part and parcel of the adoration of the path of knowledge, will help him in gaining the experience of the *Brahman*³⁵. This experience of *Brahman* is treated either way i.e., *Jīvanmukti* (salvation while alive) or *videhamukti* (salvation after death) and finally it leads to *Brahma-sāyujya* (communion with the *Brahman*) or *Brāhmaikyam* (identity with the *Brahman*).

The Assistance of the Yogic Means in the Performance of *Karman*:

As far as the question of *karma-yoga* is concerned, the views of Vāllabha Vedānta are to be understood in a very careful manner. One of the natures of *karman* is applicable in the context of the creation of the Universe. In other words, out the five foundational requirements of the creation namely *kāla* (time), *karma* (activity), *svabhāva* (nature), *prakṛti* (Primordial Nature), and *puruṣa* (the Being), it is included in the Cosmic form (see fn. No. 7 & 8). Further, the *karman* also mean the sacrificial activities and the worshipping the gods as has been taught in the *śāstras* like the *śrutis* etc. These are considered as having being included in the form of God or the Lord. Mahāprabhu Śrī Vallabhācārya says:

“One should understand the sacrificial activities described in the beginning portion of the *Vedas* as the form of Lord Hari”, In all these sacrifices namely *Agnihotra*, *Darśapūrṇamāsa*, *Paśu*, *Cāturmāsya* and *Somayāga*, one should understand the five forms of Hari. The subordinate sacrifices namely *prayāja* etc. and the instruments used in sacrifices namely *sruk-sruvā* etc. also are not different from the Hari. These sacrifices are in the form of eternal *prakṛti-karman* (primary activities) and that is none other than Hari. On the contrary the *kāmya-karmans* are known to be *vikṛti-karmans* (secondary activities).³⁶”

The question is: the sacrificial activities are product of human effort / endeavour and in that sense, can it be considered as ‘eternal’? To answer this Mahāprabhu says: as the form / image of the Lord appears in meditation in the same manner; the sacrificial activities, which is of formal placement of fire type or of *somayāga* type, essentially are nothing but the physical activities and the performance of mental activities like meditation in that, that ultimately reveals the Supreme Self – it is not ‘created’³⁷. In any case, during these sacrificial activities, there is an instruction to meditate upon the gods to whom the oblation is offered. In the process of meditating upon these gods, it is said to concentrate upon the images of the gods as has been described in the *śāstras* and that is obligatory³⁸. And here again we find the assistance of the means as adopted in the path of yoga. According to Mahāprabhu, when someone performs the *niḥkāma-karma* (rituals without any desire of its fruit), that bestows the immortal pleasure upon the individual being (*jīva*) which is part and parcel of the *Brahman*, the Supreme Conscious Being. This is considered to be the tiniest conscious part of the *Brahman*, and that is the Super most pleasure than any of the worldly pleasures³⁹.

Apart from the adoration activity of the Lord – that is being performed by the individual being, which is part and parcel of the creation of the Universe – the third type of activity is social activity, because, man is a social animal. This can be seen as the duties prescribed in the systems of *varṇas* (casts) and *āśrama* (stages of human life) in the ancient *sāstras*. Śrīmad Bhagavad-Gītā teaches to perform this as part of the worship activities to the Lord Himself: If someone performs his / her respective duties, he / she gains the ultimate goals. That is available only when someone performs his / her duty which is a different form of worshipping the God, and it is in fact nothing but the intrinsic nature of the being. In other words, one should perform his / her duty thinking that this is nothing but the worshipping of the Lord. In this way, the performance of the action becomes *karma-yoga*⁴⁰. The *Viṣṇu-sūtra* clearly states that one should associate his / her mind with the Lord through his / her respective action and that is called ‘*yoga*’⁴¹. This is how, even if the means as has been prescribed in the path of *yoga* are not very much regular in the performance of action, still they cannot be treated completely foreign to it. Because, while performing His own social activities, the Creator of the Universe follows the instinct of performing the activities as has been designed by the Supreme Being in a sense of soft devotional performance and at the same time it is strict meditational action. Therefore, no prejudices can be assigned to it.

The *Ātmayoga* to be Performed Independently Without Making it Subordinate to *Karma*, *Jñāna*, and *Bhakti*:

According to Vāllabha Vedānta, in all those works of Sāṅkhya-Yoga, where the subject matters / topics are different from those narrated in the *śrūti*s, are refuted by the author of Brahmasūtra himself, and thus they are not taken to be authentic. In spite of that the Sāṅkhya-Yoga-śāstras are considered to be means under the Paurāṇika category because that presents the ‘knowledge of distinguishing the eternal and non-eternal entities’ (*nityānitya-vastu-viveka-jñāna*) in one hand and confirming the knowledge through controlling the mind on the other hand. Therefore, this is accepted as a subordinate but effective means either being part of the path of *karma*, or being part of the path of *jñāna* (knowledge) or being part of the path of *bhakti* (devotion). Therefore, only by following the Sāṅkhyan process when out of the five facets of *avidyā* (ignorance) the followings namely *dehādhyāsa* (the superimposed cognition of the Self upon the body), *indriyādhyāsa* (the superimposed cognition of the Self upon the sense-organs), *prāṇādhyāsa* (the superimposed cognition of the Self upon the vital-energy) are eradicated, and further the *ahaṅkāra* (ego) is removed, then only it (*yoga*) is considered to be effective means. The question is: whether the *yogi* being completely free from these superimposed cognitive instances gets salvation from the bondage of the ‘ignorance’ that ought to stay till the death; or he is reborn as a *jñāna-yogi* who is competent with the *ātmanubhāti* (realization of the Self) as has been taught in the Upaniṣads, and who is potent to get liberated. In the same manner, only following the path of *yoga*, when someone gets the knowledge through the practice of *yoga*, and after that the *yogi* gives up his body (dies) and gets released from the bondage of ‘ignorance’ (*avidyā*).

If the path of *yoga* is practiced as subordinate to the main paths of *karma*, *jñāna*, *bhakti* described in the *śāstras*, then only it can give the results depending upon the main paths. However, if the path of *yoga* that is full of blemishes like that one followed in the *vāma-mūrga*, a sect of Tantra, then it will lead to hell or the *yogi* is reborn again and in that he may get happiness to some extent. The *yoga* – that is not associated with the Supreme

Divine Being but independently associated with the individual self – being described in the Purāṇas and since it is included in the means of Purāṇic category, it can give result only if it is practiced accordingly⁴².

Conclusion:

This is how we have seen that the only One, Non-dual, *Brahman*, in the form of *sac-cid-ānanda* Himself spreads His divine plays in the Universe through His manifold *nāma-rūpa* and *karma*, and following the theory of Karmāra-aivism, it can be said in the *Vedānta* that:

*brhma bandho brahma mukti + brahma baddha + tathetara + /
j + n + ne tathā brahma kara e mokṣa-bandhaya + //
brahma ābarhama b bandho brahma y eva yathā mata + /
brahma ābarhama b mukti + brahma y eva tathocyate //*

Notes and References:

¹ See: “*tatra pratividhāsyāmo vedārthabrahma b vedānukūla-vicāra iti kim atra yuktam? Vyākhyānam iti, vyākhyānato viśeṣapratipatte*” (Brahmasūtrā ubhāya (Br.S.-A) 1.1.1); “*smṛti-pratyakṣam aitihiyam anumānam catuṣṣāyam etai ādityama ālam sarvair eva vidhāsyate*” (Taittirīyāra yakam 1.2.1); “*śrutipratyakṣam aitihiyam anumānam catuṣṣāyam pramā e anavasthānāt vikalpāt sa virajyate*” (Bhāgavata-Purāṇam (Bh.P) 11.11.17).

² Cf. “*Vedā /Śrīkṣā-vākyāni Vyāsa-sūtrā i caiva hi samādhi-bhāṣā Vyāsasya pramā ā-catuṣṣāyam uttaram pūrva-sandehavārakam parikīrtitam aviruddham yat tu asya pramāṇam tac ca nānyathā etad viruddham yat sarvam na tad mānam katha ākana*” (Tattvārthadīpanibandha (TDN.) 1.7-8).

³ “*artha ayam eva nikhilair api vedavākyai /rāmāya i /sahita-bhārata-paṭkarātraī /anyaiś ca śāstravacanai /saha tattva-sūtraī /nirīyate sah dayam harinā sadaiva*” (TDN. 1.104).

⁴ “*evam pūr ājānodayāvadhī yad grāhyam pramā ātvena tad nirūpya tadanantaram yat pramāṇam tad āha – athavā sarvarūpatvāt nāmalīlavibhedata /viruddhāṣaparityāgāt pramāṇam sarvam eva hi - vāṣmātram eva pramāṇam arthasya bhagavadrūpatvāt... rūpavad nāmalīlavā /vibhedānām vaktavyatvād nānāvidhāni vākyāni pravṛttāni. viruddhavākyatvenaiva parasparam bhāsamāne ev api avirodhaprakāram āha - viruddhāṣaparityāgād iti. viruddhāṣaparityāgo dvedhā vaktavya / bhagavat sāmāthyena alaukikaprakāre ā bhagavata /sarvarūpatvena vā. ato yukta eva avirodha /” (Saprakāśa-Tattvārthadīpanibandha (TDN-P) 1.9).*

⁵ “*kutas tu khalu ... evam syāt. katham asata /sad jāyeta ? sattveva ... idam agre āsīd ekam evādvītyam. tad aikṣata bahu syām prajāyeyeti*” Chāndogyopaniṣad 6.2.2-3.

⁶ “*tad ha idam tarhi avyākṣtam āsīd tad nāmarūpābhyām eva vyākriyata*” (Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad (BrAU.)1.4.7).

⁷ “*traya idam nāma rūpam karma ... brahma etaddhi sarvā i nāmāni ... rūpā i ... karmā i vibharti. tad etad trayam sad eka ayam ātmā. ātmā u eka /san etad trayam*” (BrAU.1.6.1-3).

⁸ “*dravyam karma ca kāla /svabhāvaḥ jīva eva ca / vāsudevāt paro brahman! na cānyo ’sti tattvata /// ... sa eṣa bhagavān liṅgai /tribhir ebhir adhoṣaja // svalakṣitaḥ /brahman! sarveṣām mama ceśvara /// kālam karma svabhāvam ca māyeṣo māyayā svayā / ātmani yad ṣcchayā prāptam vibubhuḥ /upādade/” (Bh.P. 2.5.14-21). “*yajñarūpo hari /pūrvakā ā brahmatanu /pare atārī hari / kṣā /śrībhāgavate īyate... purā eṣa api sarveḥ tad tad rūpo hari /tathā. Kriyā jñanam ca dvayam prakṛtikṣya yo avatīr ā /kṣā /sa bhāgavate viśiṣṭo nirūpyate. ata /kha āśo nirūpa ām vede bhāgavate tu samudāyena nirūpya tasya līla /anekavidhā /nirūpyante*” (TDN-P. 1.11-12)*

⁹ “akāyam ha vai cāturmāsyayājino sukātam bhavati” (Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 1.6.1).

¹⁰ “viśvayātā māyājanyā viśvayo bhagavān” (Bh.P. - Subodhinī 2.9.33). “aṅ api brahma vyāpakam kṛṣṇa / yaśodākrōṣe sthito sarva-jagadādhāro bhavati” (TDN-P. 1.54).

¹¹ “yasmīn sarvāṅ bhūtāni ātmaivābhūd vijānata // tatra ko moha / ka / śoka / ekatvam anupaśyata //” (Kenopaniṣat 7.).

¹² “eko devo vahudhā nivīṣo ajāyamāno vahudhāvijāyate ... tam yathā yathā upāsate tathaiḥ bhavati” (Mudgalopaniṣad 3). “ye yathā mām prapadyante tān tathaiḥ bhajāmy aham /” (Bhagavad Gītā (BhG). 4.11). “api saśrādhane pratyakānumānābhīyām” (Br.S. 3.3.24). “tad rūpam kṛtakam anugrahārtham tac cetaśm aīśvaryaṅ. Rūpam vā aīndriyam anta karaṅ pratyakānirdeśāt” (Vākyakāra Brahmānandi), “tvam bhāvayogaparibhāvita hṛt saroja asse śrutekṛtapatho ... yad yad dhīyā ta urugāya vibhāvayanti tad tad vapuḥ / praśayase sadanugrahāya” (Bh.P. 3.9.11).

¹³ “so kāmāyata dvitīyo me ātmā jāyete / sa manasā vācam mithunam samabhavad” (BrAU.1.2.4).

“yo manasi tiśān manaso antaro” (ibid.3.7.20). “bhumir āpo nalo vāyu / kham mano ... iti iyam bhinnā prakṛtiḥ” (BhG. 7.4). “sa mānasīna / ātmā janānām” (Taittirīyāra) yaka 3.11.1).

¹⁴ “dravyasya śudhy-aśuddhī ca draveḥ vacanena ca / saśkāre kālā kālāna mahattvāpatayāthavā // śaktiśaktiāthavā samādhyā yadātmane ... kvacid guṇo pi doṣa / syād, doṣo pi vidhinā guṇaḥ” (Bh.P. 11.21.10-16).

¹⁵ Bh.P. 11.20.6-8.

¹⁶ Bh.P. 10.26.11-15.

¹⁷ “vidyāvidye hare / śaktiḥ te māyayaiva vinirmite / te jīvasyaiva na anyasya ... ātmalābho vidyayā dehalābho avidyayā iti. ubhayo / jīva-dharmatvam vyāvartayati hare / śaktiḥ. tena bhagavad icchayaiva tayo / āvirbhāva-tīrobbhāvayo / hetutvam ... te ubhe jīvarūpasyaiva aśāsya bhavato na anyasya jācāśāsya antaryāmiḥ vā ... svarūpājñānam ekam hi parva dehendriyāsava / anta karaṅ am eśām hi caturdhādhyāsa / ucyate. pañcaparvā tu avidyā iyam yadbaddho yāti saśāśtim ... vidyayā avidyānāśe tu jīvo mukto bhavīyati. Dehendriyā / sarve niradhyastā / bhavanti ... svabudhyā tīnavat pratibhāne pi na sarveśām budhyā tathā pratiyante ... evam sādhanasampattau pañcaparvā vidyā sampadyate yayā kṛtvā jātasākātkāra / tam praviśed” (TDN-P. 1.46).

¹⁸ “ye asmābhiḥ / jñānādaya / upāyatvena uktā / ... bhagavatkṛpāyuktatve teśām api phalāsādhakatvāt ... vastutas tu kṛpāiva sādhanam” (TDN-P. 2.307)

¹⁹ “karmayogādaya / sarve kṛpāḥ / odgamanahetava / udāsīnatayā udbhedād nahi sarvātmanā phalam, bhaktau atyādareḥ iva prakāśo jāyate hari / ātmānam ca tato dadyāt sukhe kā paridevanā! Sahanam kṛnanam gaṅgāsthitivad eva tat sāśkhyo yoga / tathā bhaktiḥ / tatra premā atisaukhyadam” (TDN-P. 2.312-314).

²⁰ Śvetāsvataropaniṣad 6.13; Kaṭhopaniṣad 2.3.10-11.

²¹ “sāśkhyo bahuvīdha / prokta / tatra eka / satpramāṅka / aśāvimśati-tattvānām svarūpam yatra vai hari / ... anye sūtre niśidhyante yogo pi eka / sadādṛṣṭa / Yasmin dhyānam bhagavato nirbīje pi ātmabodhaka / ... cittavṛttinirodho yoga / sa ca bhagavad-dhyānārtham aśgatvena upayujyate sa prāmāṅka / vastu svatantratayā phalāsādhakatvena prokta / tathāsiddhihetuḥ / jñānātmā ca tathā anye dehendriyādisādhakā / te aprāmāṅkā / ... dhyānābhāve pi ātmabodhāśgabhūta / prāmāṅka eva ... vairāgyajñāmayāgaiś ca premā ca tapasā tathā ekenāpi dṛṣṭena īsam bhajan siddhim avāpnuyāt. pañcaparvā-gayukta-puruṣa / bhagavantam bhajet. tatra prathamam vairāgyam aśgam, tad abhāve bhagavad-āveśābhāvāt na bhajanasiddhiḥ / ... pañcānām samudāyo durlabha iti gauḥ / apakāśam āha ...” (TDN-P. 1.93-95).

²² TDN-P. 1.103.

²³ “mām ca yo viyabhicāreḥ bhaktiyogena sevate / sa guṇān samatīyaitān brahmabhūyāya kalpate // brahmaḥ hi pratiśāham ... / śāsvatasya ca dharmasya sukhasyaikāntikasya ca” (BhG. 14.26-27).

²⁴ “ātmāiva īdam agra āsīt. so anuvīkṛtya na anyad ātmano apaśyat so ‘aham asmi’ iti agre vyāharat. tato ‘aham’-nāmā bhavāt. tasmād api etarhi āmantrito ‘aham ayam’ ity eva agre uktvā atha anyad nāma prabrūte yad asya bhavati. Sa yat pūrvo asmāt sarvasmāt sarvān pāpmān auśat tasmāt puruṣa / ośati ha vai sa tam yo asmāt pūrvo vubhūśati ya / evam veda. so abibhet tasmāt ekāki bibheti. sa ha ayam īkṛtām cakre yad madanyad nāsti kasmān nu bibhemi iti. tata eva asya bhayam vīyāya. kasmād

vyabhe vyad dviṭyād vai bhayam bhavati. sa vai na reme, tasmād ekākī na ramate, sa dviṭyam aicchat. sa ha etāvān āsa, yathā strī-pumāṁsau samparisvaktau sa imam eva ātmānam dvedhā apātayat ... brahma vā idam agre āsīd. tat ātmānam eva aveda 'aham brahma asmi' iti. tasmāt tat sarvam abhavat. tad yo yo devānām pratyabudhyata sa eva tad abhavat. ” (BrAU.1.4.1-3, 10).

²⁵ Chāndogyopaniṣad 6.8-16.

²⁶ “anekadhā s ॥ ॐ kathanasya prayojanam āha – yathā kathaḥ cid māhātyam tasya savatra var ḥyate bhajanasyaiva sidhyartham – ‘tat tvam asi’ – ādikam tathā. bhaktisvarūpam āha - māhātmyajñāna-pūrvas tu sud ॥ ॐ hasarvatodhikasneho bhakti /iti prokta /...” (TDN-P. 1.41-42).

²⁷ Bh.P. 2.2.6-14.

²⁸ Subodhinī on Bh.P. 2.2.6-14.

²⁹ Bh.P. 11.3.39.

³⁰ Bh.P. 11.20.31-35.

³¹ “saiva naiva reme. tasmād ekākī na ramate. sa dviṭyam aicchat. sa ha etāvān āsa” (BrAU.1.4.3).

³² TDN-P. 1.13.

³³ Br.S.-A. 4.1.11.

³⁴ Subodhinī on Bh.P. 10.37.27.

³⁵ “sūryādirūpadh ॥ g brahmakā ॥ ॐ jñānaḥ gam iryate purā ॥ ॐ vapi sarve ॥ tattadrūpo hari /tathā. upāsanā /nirūpyante. Tat cittaśuddhidvārā iti kecit. Phaladānadvārā māhātmya-pratipādanena bhaktidvārā iti siddhānta / tathā purā ॥ ॐ ktānām durgā-ga ॥ pati-prabh ॥ ॐ nām viśi ॥ ॐ aśe ॥ ॐ atvam āvara ॥ a-devatātvena, tathāpi bhinnārthatvam āsaḥ ॥ ॐ ya tattadrūpo hari /iti uktam. sādhanarūpa / phalarūpa /svayam eveti ekavākyatā” (TDN-P. 1.12), “vedoktānām agnyādīnām devopāsanābuddhyā agnihotrādikara ॥ ॐ bhedabuddhe /vidyamānatvāt tattaddevatāsāyujyam ... ekadā bahudevopāsanāyām karmaprādhānyāt karmamārgīyam eva phalam na upāsanā-phalam ” (TDN-P. 2.265-267), “śrutau brahmatvenaiva sarvatra upāsanāyā /uktatvāt upāsye ॥ ॐ bhagavadvibhūti-rūpatvena śuddhabrahma-rūpe ॥ ॐ api atathātvam jñātvā śruti /brahmatvopāsanāyā /phalasādhanatvam vadati, na tu upāsye brahmatām api iti manvān /ye upāsate te ‘pratīkālambanā ॥ ॐ iti ucyante... kintu śuddhabrahmatvam jñātvā ye upāsate tān eva brahma prāpayati iti vādarāya ॥ a /ācāryo manyate ... vastutas tu upāsanāyām upāsyaśvarūpajñānasyāpi aḥ gatvāt...” (Br.S.-A. 4.3.16.)

³⁶ TDN-P. 1.11; 2.2-3.

³⁷ “nanu k ॥ ॐ tisādhyo yāgādi /katham nitya /? iti cet tatra āha ... yathā dhyāna-dhāra ॥ adibhi / bhagavanmūrte /ānandarūpasya abhivyakti /tathā ādhānādisomāntakriyābhi /vedabodhita-dehace ॥ ॐ ābhi /dhyānādisahitābhi /yajñasvarūpi ॥ ॐ pi bhagavato ‘bhivyakti /iti artha ॥ (TDN-P. 2.15).

³⁸ “yasyai devatāyai havi /g ॥ hītam syāt tām dhyāyed va ॥ ॐ kari ॥ ॐ yan sāk ॐ ād eva taddevatām prī ॐ āti pratyak ॐ ād devatām yajati” (Aitareya Brāhmaṇa 11.8.1).

³⁹ “sa ca svargo dvidvidha /... su ॥ ॐ hu arjyate iti svarga /sattvākārānta kara ॥ sarvehānīv ॥ ॐ ttau yad ātmasukham prakā ॐ bhavati tad agnihotrādisādhyam. sarvadevānām tu ॥ ॐ au ādhyātmikatve yāgasya jāte ātmānanda /prakā ॐ bhavati. etad abhāve tu bhautikatve svargaloko tathā bhavitum na arhati” (TDN-P. 2.4-5).

⁴⁰ “sve sve karma ॥ abhirata /sa ॐ siddhiam labhate nara // svakarma-nirata /sidhim yathā vindati tat śru ॥ u // yata /prav ॥ ॐ tti /bhūtānām yena sarvam idam tatam / svakarma ॥ tā tam abhyarcya siddhiam vindati mānava ॥” (Bh.G. 18.45-46).

⁴¹ “ātma-prayatna-sāpek ॐ ā viśi ॥ ॐ ā yā mano gati // tasyā /īśvarasa ॐ yoga /yoga ॥ ॐ iti abhidhīyate ” (Vi ॥ u Purā ॥ a 6.7.3)

⁴² “evam sā ॐ chhya-yoga-bhaktīnām melane phalam uktvā kevalānām phalam āha ... kevele sā ॐ chhye dvayam aḥ gam - sa ॐ ghātād bhinnatayā ātmajñānam aha ॐ ckārābhāva /ca. etayo /nirvāho ‘naiva ki ॐ cit karomi’ iti buddhi /vairāgyam ca. janmāntare jñānī san utpadayte ... kevalayogam āha ... yāvajjīvam yogābhyāse jñānodaye yogavalenaiva deham tyaktvā avidyāto vimucyate. Bhakti-sahita / cet pūrvoktam eva phalam... ni ॐ iddhayo /phalam āha ... dharmamārgāt bhra ॐ ॐ e tatsidhyartham kadācit ni ॐ iddham api kuruta /apeyapānena nā ॐ śuddhā bhavātīti vimārge paripo ॐ ite narakāyaiva bhavata /paścād (janmāntare) ki ॐ cit sukham bhavet ... sā ॐ chhyayogaśāstram purā ॥ mūlakam

aṅgatvena nirūpitam, tad api paramparayā nityānityavastuvivekasya jñānāṅgatvam. tathā citta-nirodhasya jñānasthāpakatvam. anyathā jñānam stutam bhavātīti tayo /aṅgam sāṅkhyā-yogau na tu sarvathā tat pramāṇam. apramāṇāṅśam spaṅyati padārthatattva-nirdhāre na pramāṇam kathaṅcana” (TDN-P. 2.205-208).

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